

**City of Freeport**  
**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
March 11, 2014

**I. Meeting Called to Order**

Mayor Russ Barley called to order the regularly scheduled council meeting of March 11, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

Members present: Mayor Russ Barley, Council members Elizabeth Brannon, Ray Jackson, Jennifer Laird, Janice McLean and Harold Taunton.

**II. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

The invocation was given by Councilman Taunton, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

**III. Approval of Past Minutes – February 27, 2014**

**Board Action:**

*Councilman Jackson motioned to approve the minutes of the regular council meeting of February 27, 2014 as presented, Councilwoman Brannon seconded. There was no public or council discussion; the motion carried 5:0.*

**IV. Staff reports**

1. Planning Department

A. 2<sup>nd</sup> reading/adoption – proposed golf cart ordinance

City Attorney Clayton Adkinson addressed the Council and advised them NOT to proceed with the proposed golf cart ordinance. Adkinson, upon further research of the Florida Statutes, had determined that an in depth study was required by the City prior to enacting an ordinance that would designate specific streets as allowing golf carts. Adkinson estimated the cost of such a study to cost between \$5,000-10,000. Adkinson advised that any regulations the City adopted had to be at least as strict as the Statute, but could not be less strict than required by Statute.

Planner Latilda Hughes-Neel agreed with Attorney Adkinson.

Mayor Barley commented that the City did not need to spend money on a study.

Councilman Jackson asked the legality of riding golf carts on city/county streets at this time. Attorney Adkinson confirmed that golf carts are currently prohibited on state/county/city roads inside the City; Attorney Adkinson commented that within developments with private roads, golf carts are used, because private roads aren't subject to the Statute.

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**Board Action:**

*Councilwoman Brannon motioned to reject the draft golf cart ordinance. Councilwoman Laird seconded the motion.*

Additional discussion:

- Bob Mims asked if golf carts can cross public streets. A representative of the Sheriff's Dept. stated that direct crossing was probably okay. Mims asked about riding on the bike-path. It was determined that the bike-paths were within the ROW of Great Hammock Bend which is a city ROW; golf carts would not be allowed.
- A (unidentified) Hammock Bay resident asked if the City would accept a study paid for by Hammock Bay residents. Attorney Adkinson said they could make the request to the City.
- A (unidentified) Hammock Bay resident recounted several unsafe incidents regarding golf cart operation by minors and stated that the drivers of golf carts should be at least 16.
- Councilman Jackson asked Planner Hughes-Neel if all Hammock Bay streets were inside the City. Hughes-Neel affirmed that they are, since 2011.
- Councilwoman McLean suggested that the residents review the golf cart ordinance passed in Panama City for the development called "The Grove".

**Board Action:**

*Mayor Barley called for a vote on the motion on the floor. The motion carried 5:0 in favor of rejecting the proposed golf ordinance.*

Planner Hughes-Neel announced that the 2013 Large Scale Amendment 02 had been approved by the Department of Economic Opportunity. Hughes-Neel will begin the process for adoption.

2. Legal Matters

No items were presented.

3. Fire Department report

Chief Chad Harrell presented the monthly report: 35 calls, 1 medical, 5 motor vehicle accidents, 210 hours training, 106 hydrants maintained, several classes. Harrell also announced that a \$3000 grant had been received through the City's insurance provider.

4. Park Department report

No report was given.

5. Engineer report

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No report was given.

**V. Old Business**

**1. Prioritize Capital Project list**

Mayor Barley encouraged the council to circle their top 5 capital project and turn them in for ranking.

**2. Chelco payment kiosk**

Mayor Barley affirmed that the kiosk to be placed by Chelco would also have a drop slot for City water/sewer bills.

**Board Action:**

*Councilman Taunton motioned to approve the Chelco kiosk with the drop slot for city water/sewer payments. Councilwoman Brannon seconded the motion. There was no further discussion by the Council or the public. The motion carried 5:0.*

**3. Budget amendment – new budget line item (festival revenue & expenses)**

Mayor Barley presented the budget amendment to add the line item “Festival revenue/expenses.

**Board Action:**

*Councilman Taunton motioned to approve the line item addition. Councilwoman Brannon seconded the motion. There was no further discussion by the Council or from the public. The motion carried 5:0.*

**4. Annexation Update**

Planner Hughes-Neel gave the Council an overview of the Annexation Initiative progress.

Attorney Adkinson suggested that the Council could waive the requirement for a survey; the work could be completed with the property legal description.

Bob Mims asked how the land use designation of properties would be affected by coming into the City. Hughes-Neel explained that the City currently has an ordinance in place which would automatically place the annexing properties into the land use category which most closely corresponded with the county designation they had previously.

**Board Action:**

*Councilwoman Brannon motioned to waive the survey requirement for the Annexation Initiative. Councilwoman Laird seconded the motion.*

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Additional discussion:

Councilman Taunton asked Attorney Adkinson how property disputed would be handled. Adkinson responded on a case by case basis.

Councilman Jackson questioned if waiving the survey requirements would cause a problem with previous applications when a survey was required. Attorney Adkinson asserted no, because the City was requesting that property owners come in; it is the City's initiative.

**Board Action:**

*Mayor Barley called for the vote; to waive the requirements for surveys for the Annexation Initiative. The motion carried 5:0.*

**5. Sewer Finance Agreement**

Councilwoman McLean presented the sewer agreement revisions for Council review/approval; that the road bore would be paid for by the applicant; a copy of the pre-application would be attached to the agreement; the \$10 fee was removed as it had no application; the recording fees were left in.

**Board Action:**

*Councilman Jackson motioned to table the agreement, as he wanted time to study it. Councilman Taunton seconded the motion. There was no further discussion by the Council or the public. The motion carried 5:0.*

**VI. New Business**

**1. Leak adjustment request/Mr. Alfred Buford**

Mr. Alfred Buford addressed the Council. He described his situation as having been hospitalized while two major leaks occurred at his home. The repairs were in excess of \$400. The water bill due to the leak was \$345. Mr. Buford was made aware that the City offers a one-time forgiveness where half of a water bill is forgiven by Water Clerk Jennifer Douglas, but was told he needed to address the Council for any further relief.

**Board Action:**

*Councilman Jackson motioned to forgive the Water bill except for \$14; that this was a one-time occurrence based of Mr. Buford's situation. Councilwoman Brannon seconded the motion. There was no further discussion by the Council or the public. The motion carried 5:0.*

**2. Picking on the Porch event/Mayor Barley**

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Mayor Barley requested that the “Picking on the Porch” event be made an official city event and that the person in charge be compensated. The Council discussed the dates, times and location, and left those decisions to the Mayor.

Councilwoman McLean remarked that the elderly citizens particularly enjoyed the event that they could attend easily.

Deputy Clerk Al Wilson stated that it was a good event for the City.

**Board Action:**

*Councilman Taunton motioned to make the “Picking on the Porch” an official city event and to compensate the person/employee in charge. Councilwoman McLean seconded the motion. There was no further discussion by the Council or the public. The motion carried 5:0.*

3. **Ball-field Request/Councilman Taunton**

Councilman Taunton brought a plan for a ball-field designed for the physically handicapped to the Council for consideration. The field would be paved and covered with recycled rubber/asphalt for safety.

Planner Hughes-Neel remarked that there were good ADA grants that could be sought for funding. Hughes-Neel further remarked that Recreation Director Shane Supple was involved in Walton County Special Olympics and perhaps this facility could be utilized in conjunction with that program. Councilman Taunton stated he would try to parley funding in conjunction with other funding sought through Preble-Rish.

Councilman Taunton urged the Council to place this project on the capital project priorities.

**VII. Council Business Not On Agenda**

No additional business was presented.

**VIII. Public Comment**

Friday McCormick requested council to request Cox Communications to replace the local weather channel.

**IX. Adjournment**

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.

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APPROVED:

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Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Council President

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

APPROVED